

DICK TOGO! TAKA MICHINOKU! Extreme MAYUMI! GREAT SASUKE! DOS CARAS! KAORU!
and other stuff I saw and heard this week!

Howdy!

Welcome to DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW # 16!

I'm knee deep in tapes as we await the big day! This will be sort of a supplemental issue, because the big dog issue of Yamada/Liger and All-Japan 93 will be out before this weekend so I figured I'd better gush about this match before I forget something important about it.

- I have win, place, and show for the DVDVR match of the year! The Michinoku Pro Ten Man match WHIPPED ASS SO EXTRA HARD! Top to bottom, the most enjoyable 32 minutes of wrestling I've seen this year (Thanks Ollie, you fuckin Rule!). It starts off great with Handsome Dick Togo, Shiryu, Men's Teiho (with Barry Windhamesque hair), Funaki, and TAKA Michinoku doing the SOMETHING DX salute and I'm instantly psyched. Dick Togo comes to the ring in the coolest get-up in Japan- Temporary mask of a skull with an eyepatch, with the sky blue skull coat- has 2B seen 2 B B-lieved! The DX boys come out as a group, while the other five come out individually. Naniwa and Super Delphin battle it out for coolest entrance, with Delphin winning with the hip Sci-Fi theme music putting him over the giant claws. Naniwa was also wearing a rather lacklustre mask- not shiny at all, so he dropped the ball in the outfit department. I was pissed that the camera went to wide to get the full effect of the prerequisite group pose. TigerMask, El Gran Hamada and Masato Yakashiji come out to much less fanfare. The match itself was relentless and absolutely fabulous without become totally suicidal (except for TAKA's springboard moonsault into the second row, which I await our boy Rey's attempt to top.) TAKA was spectacular when he had to be but didn't overshadow anybody until the aforementioned Big One. The New Fun Submission Style that Michinoku has been flirting with (talk about mutant wrestling style) popped up between breathtaking Lucha Libre sequences. The new adherent to the Newest Wave of Lucha Libre was Yakashiji. Yakashiji was always the Other Guy in all the Michinoku undercards, but in this match he did a very credible Misterio impersonation when his time for springboard intensive hurricanranas highspots came up. He also hit the best La Pantera Spinning-Slide-Into -An-Armdrag I've ever seen and he added a few twists to make the move his very own. Dick Togo stole the show with his psychotically weird presence. No fat man has ever done so much with so much, or something. He has really made gargantuan strides towards being the coolest wrestler on the face of the earth this year. Gran Naniwa made me laugh out loud a few times and did a great sequence where he tried to mirror a sequence by El Gran Hamada- where Hamada hit a swinging DDT and then hit a top rope hurricanrana. Naniwa hits his swinging DDT (the second best (behind Hamada's) of the six in the match!), and proceeds to stick the old fella on the turnbuckle. Wise old Hamada doesn't fall for it and does the "Ultimo Dragon foils Ohtani" spot and Naniwa is miffed. Naniwa ends up eventually hitting the rana but Hamada makes him earn it (20th best out of the 57 ranas in the match.:) All that speed and psychology too. I'd give away the ending if I mentioned the psychology of the final spot. Super Delphin joined everybody else in the hyper workrate ode-to-lucha extravaganza by hitting his best moves perfectly. He and Shiryu rekindled the ongoing feud they have, as they went at it a thousand miles a minute. They have such a

different slant on the lucha spots, adding a whole lot of stiffness and brutality to the grace and beauty that other slicker luchadores would use. Shiryu was the only one in the match who pretty much just put everybody else over- to the point that he didn't even attempt his signature backflip tope thing. El Gran Hamada was solid and still spectacular and was the stabilizing force that injected the psychology that his years can accommodate. He was especially effective in keeping Naniwa and Togo focused while they were in with him. Tiger Mask and TAKA's main addition to the match was the submission moves section, with each doing deuling climbing cross-arm breakers and the reprised the TigerMask-Kicks-The-Hell-Out-TAKA and Taka tries to no-sell him, but more in the Kawada way and not the RW-Hawk way. I guess that means "try to hide the pain" no-sell, as opposed to the suckass Hawk version of "I forgot its fake" no-sell. I could talk forever about this match but it will pale in comparison to seeing this charming, beautiful crowning achievement of Michinoku Pro. Get the tape.

- The Great Sasuke/Mil Mascaras/Kobayashi vs Dynamite Kid/Dos Caras/Original TigerMask would have been okay if the pall of the condition of the Dynamite Kid wasn't haunting ever person who sees this match. I was expecting him to look bad after reading the reports, but I was truly shocked at how unhealthy he looked. I really can't believe he is turning 38. JDW is right, he looked 65- and emaciated. I guess he is a double living testimony of the dangers of highspots and the danger of steroids. If one can look past the Kid, Mascaras and Caras were trying to make the best of it or so it seemed from the highly truncated version I have. The Great Sasuke shows that he has learned from the career threatening injury by doing a fatass Sasuke Special onto Caras onto the floor. Its too depressing to think of the irony of Sasuke doing that right after fracturing his skull in a match that had the Dynamite Kid in it. How much of a clue do you need?

-The Hayabusa/Shinzaki match was the dirt worst. It had a Ricky Fuji quality to it that I never want to see again. I blame everybody. Lazy, horrible, ill-conceived, badly executed, anti-climatic- you name it, it's all that.

- I saw the tip of the GAEA iceberg I just got in (YES! Ollie Rules!) and evil Mayumi Ozaki makes me feel all funny inside! Yee-HA! She's such a little ball of evil and it's great! She tends to not work, though, while filled with evil, which is a downside to an otherwise deliriously beautiful turn of events. I wish I knew what she said to Chigusa and KAORU after KAORU was whupped by two little youngsters, (who convert to Mayumi's army- Nagashimi covertly). Chigusa's expression is priceless and KAORU looks p.o.ed. This sets up Mayumi beating the hell out of my gal KAORU in the next match, which was very not JWP but very ECW/FMW in tone. I await a KAORU vs Mayumi Actual Wrestling Match with baited breath.

- AWF had a really good Fidel Sierra/Chris Adams match. I'm not kidding. For some reason, they worked really hard and made it really entertaining. I was shocked and amazed. Sierra does a side suplex and Adams does La Majistral. Go figure. The rest of the show really sucked. Ronnie Twist did an airplane spin as a finisher, which I thought was neat, but he still was coated in suck.

5 Most Stylish VESTS/COATS currently in wrestling:

5. Jimmy Harts' Misfits Jacket.

4. Kevin Nash's NWO circle the world vest.
3. Dick Togo's Sky Blue Skull Jacket.
2. Dos Caras sparkly red wind-breaker.
1. The truly Rad EMLL Barber's "sparkly scissors" coat.

NEXT: Before Friday, I will have the whole Liger/Yamada and All-Japan 93 stuff totally digested and yammered about! Plus more GAEA, FMW, and G-1 Climax! WOO-HOO!

NANIWA~!

- Dean Rasmussen, BlackJack MulliganHEAD!